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FEMA/Department of Homeland Security  
Remarks for PARADE Conference  
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Emmitsburg, MD

- I. (Opening Introductory Comments)Introduction
  - a. It's a pleasure to join you today.
  - b. It might surprise you.....over 650,000 first responders have attended course in residence here, or taken advantage of the distance learning opportunities here at the National Emergency Training Center, since Sept. 11, 2001.
  - c. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you again about a topic that is very important to not only myself, but DHS and President Bush.

- II. The nation has been through a very interesting and challenging year. This is true for the fire service nationwide. However, we know firefighters and the support members of the fire service, are not individuals to step away from challenges.
- a. Over the past year, since our last gathering here, the USFA has successfully and smoothly transitioned the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program to the Office of Domestic Preparedness.
  - b. These critical funds continue to flow weekly to fire departments across the United States.
    - i. Over \$1.9 billion in the past 4 years, and a total that will exceed \$2.5 billion with the current appropriation for the FY05 AFG program.

- ii. The peer reviews have just been conducted here in Emmitsburg, for the over 3000 applications we received for the FY04 AFG Fire Safety and Prevention program. While it is very early, it would appear an approximate \$35 million will be distributed this year for the prevention of fire.
- c. The USFA and ODP will be able to provide more information to you just as soon as the Grant Program and Procurement have an opportunity to review the peer review results.
- d. I would like to thank those of you and your organizations whom came together, worked hard, and evaluated the highest number of applicants in the 4 year history of this Fire Prevention and Safety Grants program.

e. As we now look forward to the next 4 years, I feel confident we will continue to be able to dedicate funds to the prevention of fire. I do however wish to share 2 growing concerns I have:

i. While the number of fire departments participating in NFIRS continues to grow, we still need all departments reporting to the national data center.

1. Please join me in encouraging and continuing to remind firefighters, fire leadership and community leaders the contributions that make to the safety of Americans by participating in this important program.

2. My other concern is this....if asked, how would we (the USFA) demonstrate

that these fire prevention monies have had a significant impact on the prevention of fires. I look forward to exploring ways to not only evaluate the success of this investment of American tax dollars, but also identifying the best practices of fire prevention.

3. We have certainly gotten very good at distributing money, but I am hopeful we can become equally successful at documenting the impact these moneys have had on protecting the lives of the residents of this nation.

f. When I was invited to join you today, I was asked to make some comments regarding the future of fire prevention. My comments are simply this....

- i. Sprinklers in all new construction
- ii. Smoke Alarms in every home
- iii. Building construction and technology
- iv. Urban wildland interface fire prevention
- v. Public Education throughout the nation
  - 1. Fire safe behavior
  - 2. What to do if fire occurs
- vi. Improved investigative training into causes.
- vii. Increased reporting and documenting to the National Data Center.
- viii. And finally.....community based RISK

## MANAGEMENT

- g. As a critical element of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security, the USFA has been involved in

many programs and projects directly impacting the fire service of the nation.

III. Secretary Ridge has often said that for the homeland to truly be secure, the hometown our homes must first be secure,

- a. so it follows that fire service prevention leaders such as yourselves -- who have been on the front lines protecting our communities for generations –
- b. are among the integral elements to the success of protecting our nation against the continuing threat of fire and the threat of terrorism.

IV. Washington DC can be expected to help lead, but we cannot, nor should not, micro-manage the fire protection of our country.

- a. In the end, ALL firefighters, ALL emergency personnel, and ALL local officials understand the

prevention needs of your individual communities better than you.

- b. There can be little doubt the future of fire prevention efforts in this nation look both bright and positive.

V. I'd like to look ahead to some projects and programs at the USFA.

a. Training (All Hazards Approach)

- i. While I mention often fire service focusing of USFA efforts.....with my added responsibilities as FEMA's Preparedness Director, we now no longer look at fire departments as a single response entity, but as a member of a community team response.

1. All hazard training



2. Fire service making significant contributions to assisting other agencies preparing for large scale events.

3. Overhauling the training courses of the National Emergency Management Agency, to include prevention courses.

a. Need to integrate the most current prevention body of knowledge and,

b. Looking to get all classes into a one week time frame to greatly increase the number of students able to attend courses here.

ii. One of the lessons of 911 was clear. When the garage doors go up to respond to major events, federal and state resources are NOT the first to respond. It is the local and

county departments first to be called, first to respond, and first to lead the recovery efforts. We are now clearly focused on an All-hazard training programs through both the:

1. NFA
2. EMI
- iii. We continue to explore new courses, and new opportunities through technology like the internet to continue our training mission.

b. Wildland Fires Initiative:

- i. Recently announced by Chief Dickinson in response to
  1. heavy wildland air support challenges, and
  2. Chiefs across the nation asking for help

- ii. We are not the national experts in wildland fire response but have provided a very convenient link to the vast amount of prevention and mitigation information available from many federal and state agencies. An excellent tool for preparing for and understanding the nation's wildland fire problems.

c. Civilian loss of life

- i. USFA remains focused on reducing the loss of life due to fire
- ii. Here's a quick update on some of our programs
  - 1. A Fire Safety Campaign for Babies and Toddlers

- a. Targeted to parents and caregivers  
of children under the age of 5
- b. Have generated over 50 thousand  
media releases, advisories and  
interviews since launching the  
program in late 2003.
- c. USFA and our national partners  
reaching millions more through
  - i. Pediatricians
  - ii. SAFE KIDS coalitions
  - iii. NFPA Champions
  - iv. Other service providers.

## 2. Multicultural Campaign for Babies and Toddlers

- a. Initiative begun in July of this year.

b. Targets of this campaign are

parents and caregivers in

i. African American

ii. Hispanic

iii. Latino communities

c. USFA has produced fact sheets in

six additional languages to help Fire

Service reach high risk groups.

d. USFA has also gained bilingual

support from other areas to assist

with this important campaign.

3. This past August: A Fire Safety

Campaign for People 50-Plus

a. New public education campaign

targeted high risk population aged

65 and older.

b. The USFA also target the 50-plus age group, people who are entering and caring for those in the high risk senior years.

d. National Residential Sprinkler Initiative

1. Progress is being made
2. We will continue to push for new legislation at all levels of government
3. Sprinklers save lives of citizens and firefighters.

ii. EXAMPLE: Maryland Fire Life Safety Summit

1. Held this past Spring at MFRI
2. Brought together Maryland, DC and Northern Virginia fire service representatives

3. Discussed solutions to high loss of life to fire

4. I commend them for their work and look forward to you in this room, hosting these type of summits involving not only fire service interests, but local civic leaders and members of the media for example.

5. USFA was a major participant in this effort.

e. Line of Duty Deaths (LODD) Firefighter Deaths

- i. I've been talking about firefighter deaths since I became US Fire Administrator
- ii. I know I'm preaching to the choir

- iii. But I'm going to keep preaching until there  
are no more new families at the Fallen  
Firefighter Memorial
- iv. We lose too many firefighters
- v. If there were no fires, this unacceptable loss  
of life of our firefighters would be reduced  
significantly. Hence the important role fire  
prevention plays in our current and future  
initiatives here at the USFA.
- vi. Line of Duty Death Summit in Tampa and  
Phoenix has resulted in the national  
campaign "Everyone Goes Home"
  - 1. I was proud of the way all of us came  
together
  - 2. It would NOT be impossible to thank  
everyone involved to date, but clearly we



are moving down a very strong and  
beneficial road...TOGETHER.

f. Technology

- i. Working very closely with the other elements of DHS, particularly the Science and Technology Under Secretary, the USFA will be announcing in the coming months the following:

- 1. Using existing military these high tech battlefield technology, be able to migrate these technologies to the fire service.

- 2. Virtual simulation training support equipment.

- a. Using the technology used by the military and others to provide real time and virtual stimulation in

support of developing command  
and control abilities.

- ii. I am pleased to remind you here today, a \$50 million dollar commitment by DHS for these critical and important projects to support the fire service, prevention experts and your firefighters.

- a. I would like to take a moment to thank the Science and Technology division of DHS and most importantly, the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) for their numerous and continuous contributions to the fire service of this nation.

## VI. General:

### a. Distance learning:

- i. I mentioned earlier over 650,000 students trained by the USFA at it's Noble, NFA and EMI campuses.
- ii. We continue to look to be more responsive to this nation's training, prevention and risk management needs.
- iii. We are currently reviewing NFA courses to see if some can be adjusted to one week classes to ease the burden of attending two week courses.
- iv. All firefighters and emergency response agencies would find great value in our on line courses.
  - 1. Visit the USFA web site to take advantage of this free training.
  - 2. [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)
  - 3. Subscribe to the USFA newsletter for the most current information and activities of the USFA.

b.

## VII. Conclusion

a. Fire Prevention requires partnerships. A vision of shared leadership and shared responsibility – a regional approach – counties, cities, and states working together through:

- i. mutual aid agreements,
- ii. interoperable communications,
- iii. statewide intelligence centers,
- iv. community and citizen participation

b. For more than four years now, the USFA has worked to contribute to this vision...

- i. to build strong partnerships across all segments of our society...from the
  - 1. private sector
  - 2. state,

3. tribal and local governments
4. the first responder community...in order  
to accomplish a national vision of a  
strong and safe nation.

## VIII. Conclusion

- a. Thanks again for inviting me
- b. I am honored to be serving as your US Fire  
Administrator
- c. USFA is no longer simply about grants.
- d. As for me, I have been honored to serve President  
Bush and Secretary Ridge in their efforts to not  
only address so many critical issues, but particularly  
their keen desires for a fire safe nation.
- e. There are currently no plans to change the  
leadership of the USFA.

- f. And that goes for Chief Dickinson, my Deputy  
Fire Administrator.
- g. We are currently full speed ahead, and looking  
forward to doing what we, the USFA can  
contribute to the challenges faced by this great  
nation of ours.
- h. May God Bless you all
- i. And May God bless America
- j. Thank you.